



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE CRIMINAL ALIEN REMOVALS ON THE RISE IN EL PASO

Today's sexual predator arrest is 8th in as many weeks

EL PASO – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention and removal officers here removed 9,726 criminal and other illegal aliens in Fiscal Year 2004, an 11 percent increase in criminal aliens and a four percent increase in non-criminal aliens over the previous fiscal year.

Nationwide, ICE removed a record 157,281 criminal and other aliens in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30.

ICE's Office of Detention and Removal (DRO) is responsible for detaining and deporting aliens in accordance with immigration laws.

Of the 9,726 aliens removed in the El Paso area in FY-04, 4,414 were criminal aliens. Criminal aliens are those persons eligible for removal based on a criminal conviction in the United States. In FY-03, 3,990 criminal aliens were removed.

“Congress has mandated that those individuals who have received final judicial orders of removal should be removed, especially those who pose a danger to the people of the United States,” said ICE Field Office Director Robert E. Jolicoeur, who leads the agency's detention and removal efforts in El Paso. “I commend my officers for using time-honored law enforcement tools, such as liaison with local authorities and sound investigative techniques to further protect the security of the American Public.”

ICE's detention and removal operations also contributed substantially supported Operation Predator, an ICE initiative that targets criminals who sexually exploit children. Nationwide, ICE deported more than 2,100 child predators.

In FY-04, the El Paso office deported 18 child predators. Since Oct. 1, DRO has arrested and/or deported the following eight sexual predators:

- Jose Fernando Ramirez Codina, 37, was arrested today. A Mexican national, Ramirez Codina was convicted in October of three counts of indecency with a child in Dallas. He was living in El Paso, but is now detained at the El Paso Processing Center pending a hearing before an immigration judge.
- Emanuel Ferman, 31, was arrested Nov. 1. A Mexican national, he is a registered sexual offender who recently pleaded guilty to sexual assault of a mentally ill person under his care at an institution.
- Assad Iraq, 34, a Palestinian, was arrested Oct. 26 after ICE officers learned he was not complying with the conditions of his parole. Iraq was convicted in 1999 in North Carolina for indecent liberties with a child. He was placed on parole, turned over to ICE and placed in the alternative detention program, which required he wear an electronic monitoring device. El Paso police officers arrested Iraq for resisting arrest and possession of heroin in a school zone. As a result, ICE revoked Iraq's immigration supervision.
- Jose Rocha, 33, of Mexico, was deported Oct. 21. The U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals ordered Rocha removed based on a 1997 guilty plea in El Paso for indecency with a child.
- Aurelio Navarro, 36, of Mexico, was arrested Oct. 14. He was convicted in Fort Worth for sexual assault in 1992. Navarro attempted to renew his permanent residence status, but U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services discovered his conviction and denied his application. Navarro is scheduled to appear before an immigration judge.
- Antonio Gomez, 56, of Cuba, is under removal proceedings based on a 1993 New York drug conviction. Gomez was arrested here in February 2004 for indecency with a child and possession of a controlled substance.
- Miguel Angel Vasquez, 45, of Mexico, was arrested Oct. 7. He was deported in 2001 based on a 1992 El Paso conviction for indecency with a child. After being charged with reentry after deportation, which is a felony crime, five children from California reported Vasquez allegedly sexually assaulted them. Vasquez will be deported after federal and state charges are resolved.
- Ramon Bernal, 36, of Mexico, was deported Oct. 6. The Board of Immigration Appeals in Falls Church, Va., ordered Bernal removed in May 2004 based on a 1998 El Paso sexual assault conviction and a 1987 California grand theft conviction.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.